

Commandant's Strategic Guidance for the Coast Guard Academy

Preamble

The United States Coast Guard Academy, comprising the New London, CT campus and Leadership Development Center (LDC) training detachments, is about learning and leadership, and represents the service's future. The mission of the United States Coast Guard is:

"The United States Coast Guard is a multimissioned maritime service and one of the Nation's five Armed Forces. Its mission is to protect the public, the environment, and U.S. economic interests – in the Nation's ports and waterways, along the coast, on international waters, or in any maritime region as required to support national security."

For the Coast Guard to fulfill its mission, the service continues to invest in one of its most important strategic assets – the Coast Guard Academy.

This document is intended to guide the Coast Guard Academy and ensure its connectivity to the Coast Guard as we position ourselves to meet the demands of the 21st century with attention to Readiness, People, and Stewardship. We must maintain the integrity, professionalism and adaptability of our people and the multi-mission capability that has been the key to our success.

As the Coast Guard's main intellectual resource, the Coast Guard Academy must "stay linked to the Areas of Emphasis, Objectives and Commandant's Imperatives that constitute the Commandant's Direction." The Academy must take affirmative steps to improve current and future readiness; place renewed emphasis on the growth, development and well-being of its people; and aggressively reinforce our stewardship of the public trust.

As a wellspring of leadership and character, the Academy fulfills a critical role in setting the standards for professionalism and maritime leadership within the service. Our graduates will be capable of working in an increasingly more complex and technologically sophisticated environment. The Coast Guard's Core Values – Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty – shall be the Academy's watchwords.

The Academy comprised of the Service Academy and the LDC is the sole accession point for Coast Guard officers, and as such shall ensure our future officer corps is prepared to meet increasingly diverse and complex mission demands and lead the service through the rocks and shoals of the future, during both war and peace and at home and abroad. Under the Department of Homeland Security our officers shall be visionary, vigilant, innovative and "Semper Paratus."

Institutional Vision and Mission

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| Expansion | The Academy's Vision and Mission as an Institution are expanding to include Leadership Development for all communities of Team Coast Guard: Cadets, Officer Candidates, Officers, Chief Warrant Officers, Chief Petty Officers, Petty Officers, Reservists, Civilians, Public Health Service Officers and Auxiliaries. |
| Institutional Vision | <p>The Academy's vision, developed by the Superintendent and his staff, accurately reflects this change:</p> <p><i>The Academy is a wellspring of leadership and character for the United States Coast Guard. In serving the American public, the Academy is recognized as an exemplary institution and valued as a national asset. To earn that recognition and inspire lifelong learners, we excel in education, professional and military training, and leadership development.</i></p> |
| Institutional Mission | <p>The Academy's institutional mission is:</p> <p><i>The United States Coast Guard Academy is committed to strengthening the nation's future by educating, training, and developing leaders of character who are ethically, intellectually, professionally, and physically prepared to serve their country and humanity; and who are strong in their resolve to build on the long military and maritime heritage of proud accomplishments by the United States Coast Guard.</i></p> |
| Cadet Program Mission | <p>The cadet program mission is:</p> <p><i>To graduate young men and women with sound bodies, stout hearts, and alert minds, with a liking for the sea and its lore, and with that high sense of honor, loyalty and obedience which goes with trained initiative and leadership; well-grounded in seamanship, the sciences and the amenities, and strong in the resolve to be worthy of the traditions of commissioned officers in the United States Coast Guard in the service of their country and humanity.</i></p> |
| Leadership Development Center (LDC) Program Mission | <p>The Leadership Development Center mission is:</p> <p><i>To develop the leadership potential of all Coast Guard personnel to successfully achieve all Coast Guard missions.</i></p> |

General Guidance

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| Board of Trustees | The expansion of the Academy's mission has increased the importance of the Board of Trustees, (BOT) particularly with respect to validating outcomes and assessing the performance of graduates in the field. Guidance on the specific roles and procedures of the BOT is provided elsewhere. |
| Integration | The Academy shall maximize opportunities to build mutual respect and learning between and among the communities of Team Coast Guard and more broadly, the Department of Homeland Security. We need to encourage our people to identify and embrace necessary change, employ their creative talents, share new ideas, and deliver the highest quality of service to the American public. |
| Accreditation | The Academy must be vigilant in preserving the esteem and traditions of each program. None should lose its own valuable traditions or identity or access to the resources and information it needs to accomplish its particular mission. Consolidating much of our leadership development activity at one command underscores the need for quality in all facets of the Academy's management, faculty and staff, and facilities. The Academy's faculty and staff, and the service at large, must unite in efforts to build and sustain quality in this institution. Accreditation drives program effectiveness and enhances the Academy and our graduates. It is an exercise in self-examination and in peer review, in which the Academy will discover areas that need improvement in institutional quality and effectiveness. |

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| Accreditation (Cont'd) | <p>The advantages of accreditation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving public accountability and institutional quality and effectiveness through self-governance. • Maintaining the highest standards for all programs and attracting the very best of America's youth as applicants for admission to the Cadet Program. • Assisting graduates of all schools and programs in their pursuit of admission to subsequent schools such as those granting associate, baccalaureate, and post-graduate degrees. • Providing nationally recognized academic credit for appropriate training and education provided by the institution. |
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The Academy shall maintain appropriate accreditation for all programs under its cognizance.

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| Institutional Research, Needs Assessments, Needs Analysis, External Evaluations | <p>Institutional research, needs assessments, and analyses are cornerstones of quality workforce management and a mandate for Coast Guard training and education programs, including those at the Coast Guard Academy. They continually align training and education with field needs. External Evaluations and Institutional Research provide continual feedback from the field to the Academy regarding its programs. The Academy shall maximize the contributions of these tools to design and monitor the quality of its programs.</p> |
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| Diversity | <p>By identifying new strategies to recruit and retain a diverse faculty, staff and students, we will train and deploy a diverse, highly capable and flexible workforce. Diversity objectives will be fully integrated into Academy decision-making process.</p> |
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Leadership Development

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| Purpose | <p>Leadership development is an objective common to all academy programs and schools. Continual learning and effective leadership are essential to mission accomplishment, productivity, public confidence and trust, and employee involvement and well-being.</p> |
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| Leadership Dimensions | <p>Leadership development activities can be divided into five general, somewhat overlapping dimensions.</p> |
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| • Military Service | Learning to serve Embracing a life of service and sacrifice Commitment to serving the Coast Guard |
| • Character | Making ethical choices Values and ethics Spiritual and social Commitment to others |
| • Intellect | Learning to learn Critical thinking ability Knowledge |
| • Professional | Learning to do Technical and interpersonal skills |
| • Wellness | Choosing to be healthy Psychological and physical fitness |

This delineation of separate development activities helps us understand and design them, but in practice they must work in harmony to be effective. The Academy shall maximize the integration of developmental activities within each of its programs and between them where appropriate. All Academy programs share several common learning outcomes. To the greatest extent possible,

Shared Learning

Outcomes

graduates of all Academy programs will meet the following standards, applying appropriate criteria.

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| Leadership Abilities | Ensure graduates possess the knowledge, skills, and confidence to be both leaders of character and active members of a team. Apply the leadership practicum across all aspects of the Academy and develop a functional leadership model. |
| Personal and Professional Qualities | Increase the level and understanding of professionalism throughout the student body, faculty, and staff. Ensure programs are in place to develop good citizens of the Academy, the Coast Guard and the community. |
| Communication Effectiveness | Graduates shall be able to communicate clearly, concisely, persuasively and grammatically in all forms of communications, listen, and respect diverse opinions. The importance of the objective is shared and addressed across all aspects of the Academy. |
| Ability to Acquire, Integrate, And Expand Knowledge | Graduates will have acquired and integrated the specific knowledge for follow-on professional assignments. Develop the motivations and skills for lifelong learning. Instill a desire to continue self-development. |
| Critical thinking Ability | Graduates shall be able to accomplish complex tasks in a broad range of contexts by applying the basic skills of critical analysis, systems thinking, quantitative reasoning, risk management, creative problem solving, and value-based decision-making. Increase the graduates' abilities to self-assess and account for both the explicit and implicit outcomes of their decisions. |

Commissioning Programs

Standards for All Commissioned Officers

The following standards apply to all Coast Guard officers. The Superintendent, with BOT oversight, will implement officer accession programs that deliver graduates who meet these standards.

Military Development. All graduates will maintain a professional military lifestyle that embraces the Coast Guard core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty, and demonstrate the customs, courtesies and social skills required of members of the Armed Forces. Graduates will understand, appreciate, and embody the military philosophy while dedicating themselves to service.

Character Development. Newly commissioned officers will be recognized as compelling models of solid character and demonstrated commitment to the mission and values of the Coast Guard. They will project an image that inspires a culture of respect and pride in the service excellence. They will meet the moral, social and behavioral standards of commissioned officers in the Coast Guard and be fully adapted to the role of mature, responsible adults.

**Standards for All
Commissioned
Officers (Cont'd)**

Intellectual Development. Newly Commissioned officers will, with intellectual ability and self-confidence, be able to evaluate accurately the quality of arguments presented by others and formulate well-supported opinions of their own when confronted with new ideas. They will also be able to articulate ideas in a clear and convincing manner. They will demonstrate ability and promise for continued development and commitment to life long learning.

Professional Development. Newly commissioned officers will be able to perform entry-level duties of a junior officer either ashore or afloat to a standard of competence defined in Commandant's policy. This includes operational, administrative and supervisory duties. Graduating cadets will meet the requirements for a Bachelor's Degree.

Wellness. Newly commissioned officers will practice deeply ingrained habits of psychological and physical fitness, understand the principles of healthful living, and serve as effective teachers of these principles and practices to others.

**Junior Officer
Leadership
Outcomes**

Newly commissioned officers will function effectively as junior officers in leadership capacities. They will be equipped to develop plans to accomplish complex tasks requiring the cooperative efforts of others, influence group members to work together effectively, and manage the process to a successful conclusion.

The Superintendent and headquarters' program managers, with BOT oversight, shall adjust and specifically define these development standards in accordance with continuing Needs Assessments of junior officer performance requirements. In meeting these assessed needs, the Academy and headquarters' program managers shall account for the differences and similarities between the cadet and officer candidate needs.

Balance

The Academy must strive for balance among all developmental standards: military development, character development, intellectual development, professional development and wellness.

Curriculum

Service Academy. Because of the nature of Coast Guard missions and responsibilities, cadet graduates require an undergraduate degree in quantitatively oriented studies as well as in the humanities and behavioral sciences.

The Academy must be committed to a core curriculum: a common academic experience that provides broad intellectual perspectives.

The Academy must take great care and be committed to offering cadets a major in a specific discipline that contributes most effectively to the current and future needs of the Coast Guard. Further, the Academy must recognize that specialization encourages intellectual rigor and is a critical component of a quality academic program.

Co-curricular activities that contribute to the intellectual, military, professional, physical and ethical development of cadets must complement each other. With a firm footing in technology and liberal arts, the Academy must provide a challenging, cost-effective outcomes-oriented curricula focused on active learning and assessment. The degree represents investments made to produce successful Coast Guard officers and to engender an appreciation for life-long learning, leadership, service and ethical practice.

Leadership Development Center (LDC) Program: The LDC is a forum for best practices in leadership and management. Courses are designed and developed around three transition points; accessions, promotions or advancement, and job assignment. The cornerstones for all LDC courses are leadership, learning, ethical practice and commitment to service. They instill and reinforce the Coast Guard's core values, leadership competencies, and expectations of performance and accountability.

Institutional Research

The key facets of institutional research are supporting the institutional strategic management process by examining institutional processes, embracing data collection, and developing analytical strategies to inform institutional decision-making. Combined with sound academic and professional judgment, institutional research serves as the foundation for institutional planning and decision-making.

Curriculum Management

The Superintendent shall work with headquarters' program managers and the BOT to manage degree and commissioning programs for cadets, officer candidates and direct commission officers. The following factors will be considered:

- Officer needs assessments
- Post graduate and profession requirements of Coast Guard programs
- Projected demographic profile of prospective officers in coming years
- Program reviews
- Workforce planning factors

Diversity

The Academy must strive for greater diversity in all officer accession programs, implementing innovative strategies and best practices to attract, access, retain, and graduate cadets and officer candidates.

Athletics

Athletics play an important role in attracting and retaining prospective officers, in addition to enhancing their physical and character development. The Academy must support a balanced intercollegiate athletics program that conforms to the NCAA Division III philosophy for colleges and universities. The Academy must establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletic and physical activities are an integral part to the education experience.

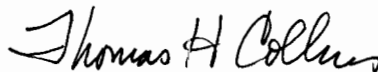
Other Considerations

The Name

The meaning of the term *Coast Guard Academy* needs to be clearly communicated. The term applies to the overall institution embracing the service academy and the Leadership Development Center. The expanded meaning of the "name" shall be aggressively marketed so all constituencies understand the Academy's role as the Coast Guard's center of excellence for leadership development.

Advanced Degrees and other innovative concepts

Because of increasing professional development demands on newly commissioned officers and continued public scrutiny regarding the nation's service academies, the Coast Guard must continuously consider ideas which would maximize the Coast Guard's return-on-investment from the Academy campus. During the development of this guidance, several ideas were proposed that are deserving of further study including the concept of a Coast Guard War College and the concept of the Coast Guard "University" that expands to include other Coast Guard Training Centers as remote campuses. These ideas and others should be explored to address the professional development needs of Team Coast Guard.



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